

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 - 16 (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) An integrated circuit (IC) comprising:
a substrate comprising at least one level of interconnection;
an oxide-insulating layer formed directly on a surface of the substrate;
at least one conductive structure formed directly on the insulating layer, the conductive structure comprising a contact to the at least one level of interconnection of the substrate;
an adhesion layer formed on a top surface of said oxide-insulating layer ~~by treating said surface of said oxide layer with a gas~~; and
a first passivation layer formed on a top surface of said adhesion layer and a top surface of the conductive structure, ~~said first passivation layer and said adhesion layer including at least one common chemical element.~~

18. (Original) The integrated circuit of claim 17 further comprising a second passivation layer formed upon said first passivation layer.

19. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 17 wherein said ~~oxide~~ insulating layer includes comprises an oxide layer comprising silicon dioxide (SiO₂).

20. (Original) The integrated circuit of claim 17 wherein said adhesion layer includes silicon oxynitride.

21. (Original) The integrated circuit of claim 17 wherein said first passivation layer includes silicon nitride (Si₃N₄).

22. (Original) The integrated circuit of claim 18 wherein said second passivation layer includes polyimide.

23. (Currently Amended) An integrated circuit comprising in a ~~three-four~~ layer stack:
a silicon dioxide insulating layer;
a silicon oxynitride adhesion layer formed on a surface of said silicon dioxide insulating layer by treating said surface of said silicon dioxide insulating layer with a gas; ~~and~~
a silicon nitride hard passivation layer formed directly on a surface of said silicon oxynitride adhesion layer; and
a photodefinable polyimide soft passivation layer formed on said silicon nitride hard passivation layer.

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Previously Presented) The integrated circuit of claim 17, wherein said gas includes one of oxygen and nitrogen (N), oxygen and ammonia (NH₃), oxygen and argon (Ar) and ozone (O₃) and argon.

26. (Previously Presented) The integrated circuit of claim 23, wherein said gas includes one of oxygen and nitrogen (N), oxygen and ammonia (NH₃), oxygen and argon (Ar) and ozone (O₃) and argon.

27. (Currently Amended) An integrated circuit comprising:

a substrate;

an insulating layer formed on the substrate;

at least one conductive structure formed directly on the insulating layer;

a composite film ~~formed on the substrate, the composite film~~ comprising:

~~a first layer comprising silicon dioxide,~~

a ~~second-first~~ layer formed from a modification of a portion of the ~~first-insulating~~ layer, and

a ~~third-second~~ layer of a material different than a material of the ~~second-first~~ layer,

wherein the ~~second-first~~ layer is disposed between the ~~first-insulating~~ layer and the ~~third-second~~ layer, and

wherein the ~~second-first~~ layer and the ~~third-second~~ layer comprise one common chemical element other than silicon; and

wherein the ~~third-second~~ layer is a passivation layer formed on the ~~second-first~~ layer.

28. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 27 wherein said ~~second-first~~ layer includes silicon oxynitride.

29. (Currently Amended) The integrated circuit of claim 27 wherein said ~~third-second~~ layer includes silicon nitride (Si₃N₄).